

## Undersecretary bids farewell to service

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — After serving on active duty for 20 years as an airman, noncommissioned officer and a commissioned officer, and the last 17 months as undersecretary of the Air Force, Carol DiBattiste has said goodbye to the Air Force and is returning to civilian life. Her resignation was official Jan. 8.

“It has been phenomenal being part of the most powerful Air Force in the world,” DiBattiste said. “I’ve had the best job anyone could ever imagine. We’ve got the best and brightest people serving this great nation. The Air Force has been my family since my first day at basic training nearly 30 years ago. Words can’t describe how much I am going to miss it and our great people.”

DiBattiste will become a partner at the law firm Holland & Knight. She will begin practicing in Washington in March and will relocate to its Miami office shortly thereafter.

While holding the Air Force’s second-highest civilian position, DiBattiste paved the way in tackling two of the most severe challenges facing today’s military: recruiting and retention. During her tenure, the Air Force exceeded its fiscal 2000 recruiting goal of 34,000 by 369 recruits, after coming off of fiscal 1999’s shortfall of 1,732 recruits — the first time the

service missed its recruiting goal in 20 years.

The Air Force also implemented several new initiatives to boost its low retention rates, including subsidizing extended child-care hours, establishing wing career assistance advisers and enhancing spouse employment opportunities. So far in fiscal 2001, the Air Force is witnessing improvements in its enlisted retention rates. For the third consecutive month, first-term re-enlistment rates have exceeded the goal of 55 percent. Additionally, second-term rates have also improved from 69 percent to 70 percent, while career rates have remained steady at 91 percent.

“The combination of boosting our number of on-the-street recruiters, our tremendous television ad campaign, the ability to expand our enlistment and re-enlistment bonuses, and the push from all the senior leaders to get the word out about the Air Force to communities across the country, is an example of teamwork at its best,” DiBattiste said.

“The Air Force is nothing without its people,” she said. “We have the most sophisticated aircraft and equipment on the planet, but without a dedicated force of talented and professional men and women they are of little use.”

DiBattiste was the service’s first undersecretary with Air Force experience, the first to have enlisted



Photo by Joyce Tew

**Former undersecretary of the Air Force Carol DiBattiste fields questions from base and civilian media at a news conference during her visit to Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., in August. DiBattiste Jan. 8 retired after serving 30 years with the Air Force.**

service time, the first to be a military retiree and the first woman with any military experience to serve in that role.

## Air Force participates in USO ‘Spirit of Hope’ award

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPN) — The Air Force will participate in the United Service Organizations’ “Spirit of Hope” award, named in honor of Bob Hope.

The USO, in conjunction with the Air Force Sergeants Association, will annually present the award to a junior enlisted member who embodies the values of men and women of the armed forces: duty, honor, courage, loyalty, commitment and integrity.

The eligibility and criteria for the award are as follows:

—Open to staff sergeants and below.

—Nomination must include contributions and specific examples that clearly show the individual is an outstanding military performer on the job.

—Cite contributions and examples of volunteerism performed in the local community or base by the individual and how the community benefited.

—The period of service for the award is Jan. 1, 2000 through Dec. 31, 2000.

Each major command, forward operating agency and direct reporting unit may submit one nomination to the Air Force Personnel Center.

The nomination must include an endorsement letter signed by the MAJCOM/FOA/DRU commander, vice commander or executive director.

(Courtesy of Air Force Personnel Center News Service)

## Computer prints allotment errors

SAN ANTONIO — Many service-members were shocked when they received their December leave and earning statements and noticed their Delta Dental Plan was stopped effective Dec. 1. That information turned out to be an error-in-fact.

“The pay system is set up to automatically generate LES information messages when a pay change occurs,” said

Defense Finance officials. “But the system message generated was incorrect and should have read that the Delta Dental Plan will stop effective Dec. 31.”

According to defense finance officials, the error occurred when the dental coverage deductions were stopped as part of the transition to TRICARE being paid via allotment as opposed to the traditional deduction.

“The LES remark stating that service-members’ dental benefits had stopped was incorrect, when in actuality people’s dental coverage deductions were complete for December, with allotments starting Jan. 1 to ensure dental coverage does not lapse,” officials said.

Military members should see no change with the exception of the allotment versus the deduction.

## Returnees EQUAL list to release Tuesday

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPC) — The latest Enlisted Quarterly Assignment Listing of available overseas returnee enlisted assignments becomes available at military personnel flights and on the Air Force Personnel Center’s World Wide Web page Monday.

This list includes assignments for people eligible to return from overseas in May through July.

Personnel officials recommend assignment preferences be updated by Feb. 2 to ensure the information is updated in the computer system before actual assignments are made. Officials with AFPC here said assignments would be released on or about Feb. 19.

EQUAL advertises upcoming assignment requirements by

Air Force specialty code and rank, and gives people a chance to update their assignment preferences to more realistically match vacancies that will be filled in a particular cycle.

New listings are released quarterly for assignments available at overseas locations as well as assignments available for those returning from overseas areas. All special-duty assignments appear on EQUAL-Plus and are updated weekly.

Military personnel flights and Commander’s Support Staff (CSS) offices have copies of the listings and can help people update their preferences. People who are on temporary duty during the advertising period should contact the nearest personnel office for assistance. People can also access the list on the AFPC home page at [www.afpc.randolph.af.mil](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil).

## Overseas EQUAL list set for release in February

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPC) — The newest Enlisted Quarterly Assignment Listing of available enlisted assignments overseas arrives at military personnel flights and on the Air Force Personnel Center’s World Wide Web home page Feb. 6.

This list includes assignments for overseas jobs opening during the October through December time

frame.

Personnel officials recommend assignment preferences be updated by Feb. 16 to ensure the information is in the computer system before actual assignments are released on or about March 5.

EQUAL advertises upcoming assignment requirements, by Air Force Specialty Code and rank, and gives people a chance to update their assignment preferences to match

vacancies that need filling in a particular cycle. Members should review, prioritize and list specifically those assignment options available to them on EQUAL.

Separate listings for assignments available at overseas locations as well as assignments available for those returning from overseas areas are published quarterly. Special-duty assignments appear on EQUAL-Plus and

are updated weekly.

Military personnel flights and Commander’s Support Staffs (CSS) will have copies of the listings and can help people update their preferences. People who are on temporary duty during the advertising period should contact the nearest personnel office for assistance. People can also access the list on the AFPC home page at [www.afpc.randolph.af.mil](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil).